

**UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT
MIDDLE DISTRICT OF GEORGIA**

**ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER #139 REQUIRING TELEPHONIC HEARINGS
IN COLUMBUS DIVISION AND MACON DIVISION CASES**

Due to the ongoing pandemic and in furtherance of our efforts toward the safety of parties, attorneys, and court staff, and because it appears that most attorneys at present prefer, when possible, to have hearings handled telephonically, the following procedures will apply in all cases pending in the Columbus Division and the Macon Division of this Court. For so long as this Order is in effect, it will replace Administrative Order #137 (re: mass calendars) with respect to cases pending in the Columbus Division and Macon Divisions.

Beginning the date of this Order and until further notice by the Court, in-person appearances by counsel, parties, and witnesses will not be allowed, absent permission from the assigned judge; hearings will be handled telephonically as described below. If counsel believes a particular matter requires in-person appearances, he or she may seek guidance from the Court by contacting the assigned judge's courtroom deputy at the number or e-mail address listed below. Each judge will manage his own docket, so the procedures may not necessarily be the same. Each judge's courtroom deputy will notify counsel and unrepresented parties of any changes to the scheduling of trials, evidentiary hearings, and other matters on a case-by-case basis. Questions should be directed to the courtroom deputies or the Clerk's Office.

Telephonic Hearing Call-In Instructions:

The Court will continue to use the AT&T Reservationless Conference Call System, which is free of charge to all parties. Dial-in procedures and the toll-free numbers for the judges are as follows:

1. Dial the appropriate toll-free number as listed below.
2. Enter the access code associated with the toll-free number.
3. Dial in at least 5 minutes before your scheduled hearing time.
4. Place all phones on mute when your case is not being heard. Do not use the "speaker" function. Do not place the call on hold.
5. Users are prohibited from recording or broadcasting the proceedings conducted by the Court.

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6. Identify yourself at the beginning of the call and each time you speak.

AT&T Call-in Information

Judge	Call-in Number	Access Code	Security Code
Judge Smith	1-877-336-1839	7930011	None
Judge Carter	1-888-398-2342	5569600	None
Judge Laney	1-888-684-8852	8196200	None

If you are unable to utilize this telephonic service, please contact the Clerk's Office prior to your hearing at the number listed below to make other arrangements.

Attorneys: Please advise your clients not to appear at the courthouse(s). Parties can assist the Court in facilitating telephonic hearings by contacting opposing counsel and interested parties well in advance of hearings to resolve any issues that circumstances of the case allow.

Contact Information: Please contact the Clerk's Office at one of the following numbers if you need additional guidance or assistance.

Macon: 478-752-3506
Columbus: 706-649-7837


If you have any questions regarding hearings, please contact the applicable courtroom deputy at the number or email address listed:

Judge	Courtroom Deputy	Phone Number	Email Address
Judge Smith	Rhonda Thomas	478-749-6813	rhonda_thomas@gamb.uscourts.gov
Judge Carter	Valerie Vaughn	478-749-6885	valerie_vaughn@gamb.uscourts.gov
Judge Laney	Shirley Williams	706-596-7153	shirley_williams@gamb.uscourts.gov

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Hearings in cases pending in the Albany, Athens, and Valdosta Divisions are **not** subject to the provisions of this Order; however, Administrative Order #137 (re: mass calendars) remains in effect with respect to cases pending in the Albany, Athens, and Valdosta Divisions.

IT IS SO ORDERED, this 10 day of September, 2020.


JAMES P. SMITH
Chief Judge
United States Bankruptcy Court